

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 MC-02 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05 L-03

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 AID-05 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00

COME-00 /057 W

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P R 280515Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2922

INFO DOD/ISA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 2797

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SN

SUBJECT: PROPOSED SALE OF M-16 RIFLES TO THAILAND

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. ONG KAH KOK, DIRECTOR OF MILITARY INDUSTRIES IN MINDEF, INFORMED DATT HE AND COMPTROLLER OF CHARTERED INDUSTRIES HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED BY MINISTER OF DEFENSE GOH KENG SWEE TO MAKE QUICK TRIP TO HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT TO CLEAR UP ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS WITH COLT CONCERNING PROPOSED SALE OF 60,000 M-16 RIFLES TO THAILAND. ONG LEFT SINGAPORE JUNE 27 AND WILL ARRIVE IN NEW YORK JUNE 28. ONG SAID MINDEF HAD RECEIVED LETTER FROM COLT ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF OUTSTANDING ROYALTIES OWED BY CHARTED INDUSTRIES TO COLT. HOWEVER, GOS IS CONCERNED THAT LETTER GAVE NO INDICATION THAT COLT WOULD SEEK STATE DEPT. APPROVAL FOR MC LICENSE FOR SALE OF RIFLES BY CHARTERED INDUSTRIES TO RTG.

2. ONG ALLEGED THAT GOS WAS UNDER "TREMENDOUS POLITICAL PRESSURE" FROM THAILAND MILITARY TO SELL M-16S QUICKLY TO THAILAND. HE SAID TEAM OF THAI MILITARY OFFICERS LED BY SECRET

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AIR VICE MARSHAL CHINH RAM IMDRA FROM RTF SUPREME COMMAND IS CURRENTLY VISITING SINGAPORE TO PRESS FOR RAPID SALE OF M-16S. ACCORDING ONG, THAI MILITARY TEAM IS ACTING ON BEHALF OF GENERAL KRIS SAVARA WHO ALLEGEDLY HAS "SECRET

FUNDS" TO PURCHASE ARMS FOR THAI MILITARY.

3. ONG SAID HE MIGHT "STOP BY" THE PENTAGON TO DISCUSS
MATTER FOLLOWING HIS VISIT TO HARTFORD. DATT CAUTIONED
ONG THAT EVEN IF COLT WERE PRESUADED TO APPROVE PROPOSED
SALE AND REQUEST MC CLEARANCE FROM STATE, STATE AND
DEFENSE WOULD HAVE TO REVIEW MATTER VERY CAREFULLY BEFORE
ANY FINAL DECISION COULD BE TAKEN.

4. COMMENT: WE WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY BANGKOK'S
ASSESSMENT OF DEGREE OF THAI INTEREST IN ACQUIRING
THESE RIFLES. ACCORDING ONG, THAI ARMED FORCES URGENTLY
REQUIRE THESE RIFLES. IF SO, WE WONDER WHY THAI MILITARY
HAVE NOT RAISED MATTER WITH OUR MAAG OR ATTACHES IN
BANGKOK. IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT GOS RECENTLY HAD TO RESCUE
CHARTERED INDUSTRIES FROM FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES. IF SO,
CHARTERED INDUSTRIES (A MINDEF CONTROLLED CORPORATION)
CONCEIVABLY MAY BE EXAGGERATING DEGREE OF THAI "PRESSURE"
IN EFFORT TO OBTAIN SALE.

GRANT

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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